

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Princeton Nurseries Historic District

other names/site number Princeton Nurseries Kingston Site

2. Location

street & number Generally along Mapleton Road and Ridge Road ☐ not for publication

city or town Plainsboro Township and South Brunswick Township ☐ vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Middlesex code 023 zip code

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New Jersey Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the National
Register

☐ other (explain): _____

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
28	3	buildings
		sites
1	2	structures
		objects
29	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/horticultural facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

DOMESTIC/single dwellings

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/conservation area

GOVERNMENT/government office

DOMESTIC/single dwellings

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

roof

walls Wood, concrete

other Steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1913-1962

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Flemer, William, Jr.; Flemer, William III

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Bauhan, Rolf W.; Flemer, William Jr.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

South Brunswick Historic Preservation Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 269

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	534300	4468730	C	18	531800	44678440
B	18	532200	4467750	D	18	531980	4469200
E	18	532390	4469200				

☐ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles H. Ashton Architectural Historian

organization Hunter Research, Inc. date December 2007 (revised March 2008)

street & number 120 West State Street telephone (609) 695-0122

city or town Trenton state NJ zip code 08608

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name **See attached list.**

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of

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Princeton Nurseries Historic District
Middlesex County, NJ

The Princeton Nurseries Historic District, also known as the Princeton Nurseries Kingston Site, is a 269-acre rural historic landscape in Plainsboro and South Brunswick Townships, Middlesex County, New Jersey, that includes 31 buildings (of which approximately 10 retain outbuildings), three bridges (two on public roads), a former railroad right-of way and extensive fields. Historically the land was the nucleus of Princeton Nurseries, a vertically-integrated commercial tree nursery that operated here from 1913 until 1995 (although operations were transferred to Allentown, New Jersey beginning in the 1960s); the nominated property therefore contains within its boundaries the administrative and operational buildings associated with the production and sale of nursery stock, houses occupied by the nursery workers and owners (some of which were present when the nursery was established and the oldest of which dates from 1756), and the fields in which young trees were brought to marketable size. Of the 31 buildings present, 28 contribute to the property's significance and three are non-contributing. Also within the boundaries are two public roads, lined in places with mature trees grown at the nursery. All of these features combine to illustrate the operations of what was once one of the largest nursery operations in the United States.

The local landscape had been shaped by three major public works projects before the nursery was established, two of which directly contributed to the founder's decision to locate here. Of the three, two have been previously listed in the National Register and the third has been found eligible. These are the Delaware and Raritan Canal (listed in the National Register on November 30, 1973), Lake Carnegie (listed June 28, 1990) and the right-of-way of the Camden and Amboy Railroad Branch Line (found eligible by New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office opinion, most recently on May 21, 1991). The canal and the railroad both provided shipping in 1913, and today all three enhance the nursery's visual and historic environment although the railroad's tracks are no longer present.

The land is generally flat (another factor in its selection), ranging in elevation from about 60 to 120 feet above sea level and sloping down to Heathcote Brook on the north and the Delaware and Raritan Canal on the west. The soil is Sassafras loam, a very deep, well-drained soil with slow to moderate surface runoff found in the coastal plains of the Mid-Atlantic states and suitable for general crops, fruits and woodlands. Native species to the soil include mixed upland hardwoods with some Shortleaf Pine (*Pinus echinata*) and Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*). This combination of soil, nearby shipping and a location near the East Coast population centers made the site nearly ideal for a tree nursery.

The native landscape has been modified for nursery use, including the construction of lanes and berms and installation of an extensive subterranean irrigation system. All four of the original farms which were acquired for the nursery are within the nominated property, although they are no longer discernible as family farmsteads following their inclusion within the larger nursery operation, as outbuildings were moved and fields subsumed into the nursery.

Two roads traverse the nominated property. Mapleton Road (now a township road, but formerly Middlesex County Route 614) runs generally north and south, from the former Aqueduct Mills (Princeton Aqueduct) to Kingston, where it becomes Academy Street. Division Street/Ridge Road (formerly Middlesex County Route

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522 and now a township road), near the northern edge of the nominated property, runs easterly to U.S. Route 1 and Monmouth Junction; U.S. Route 1 intersects Mapleton Road. Within the nominated parcel there are also a number of nameless lanes providing access to the fields, as well as two residential streets entirely within the former nursery: Railroad Avenue, alongside the former alignment of the Camden and Amboy Railroad, and its side street Greenwood Avenue. Both streets dead-end within the former nursery. The majority of the buildings within the nominated property are on Mapleton Road, Ridge Road, Railroad Avenue and Greenwood Avenue, although the core of the former nursery operational buildings are arrayed along the former railroad alignment (near Mapleton Road).

Several of the houses within the nominated area were farmhouses that predate the founding of the nursery. As these were acquired they were incorporated into the nursery's operations. Smaller, secondary buildings (such as small barns and tenant houses) from these farms were freely moved around the nursery to new locations and their uses changed, as is apparent in the following section. Other small houses were purchased nearby, such as in Kingston, and moved onto the property. None of the houses—but all of the buildings relating to the nursery operation—were built by the nursery.

Remarkably, there are only three non-contributing buildings, a modern house under construction in 2007 at the southern end of the district (#1), a telephone company utility building (#20B) and a 1960s-era house on Ridge Road (#29). The remainder of the buildings relates to the nursery operation and the housing of persons associated with it.

There are bridges over Heathcote Brook on both Mapleton and Ridge Roads, built in 2001 and 1989 respectively. While they do not contribute to an understanding of the resource, they do not seriously diminish its integrity since they are such minor elements and unrelated to the nursery. There is also a culvert near the foot of Greenwood Avenue providing access to the fields.

The former right-of-way of the Camden and Amboy Railroad exists as a level earthen berm, today in large part supporting unpaved nursery roads (and overgrown in other locations). It is a structure plainly discernible in the landscape and contributes to the significance of the nursery.

There are two examples of *allées*, rows of trees lining both sides of a traveled way, within the nominated area dating from the period of significance; one is an array of London plane trees on Mapleton Road, the other consists of two rows of towering oaks along the former roadbed of the Camden and Amboy Railroad west of Mapleton Road. Not visible but present is the nursery's water system, which also served the nearby village of Kingston. A water tower once stood on the property but has been removed, but a few scattered fire hydrants are public evidence of the system.

Finally, the majority of the land within the district remains open, as it was when the district achieved significance. While there are no structures in this component of the district, it is not undeveloped. The unpaved lanes created and maintained by the nursery provide access to the growing fields, which today are still separated by windrows. While some fields are fallow and are being overtaken by normal succession, the remains of

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nursery stock (untended for at least 12 years) are apparent in others. As a result, vistas south and east from the nursery's core, and east from Mapleton Road and south from Ridge Road are dominated by open land, but the views are not natural landscapes. Discrete rows of tall trees punctuate the scene, indicating human alteration of the land, not for aesthetic reasons but for the large-scale production of trees. West of Mapleton Road in the southern reaches of the district the land is much lower than east of the road and not as well drained. While this land is also open, it is bounded on the west by trees that line the adjacent Delaware and Raritan Canal.

The district retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Integrity of setting has been somewhat diminished through the reduction in acreage, some of which has been developed for commercial and residential use, and the loss of several buildings that existed during the nursery's prime years. These losses have likewise eroded (but not destroyed) the integrity of feeling, but the surviving acreage and buildings are sufficient to convey the essence of the nursery operation. The historic setting to the west is intact, consisting of the Delaware and Raritan Canal (listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 11, 1973).

Resources within the nominated property are as follows.

1. Modern house, 80 Mapleton Road. Non-contributing (Photo 1)
A two-story house faced with stone, under construction in 2007.

2. Barn, 80 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photos 1, 2).
This is a frame structure, 2 ½ stories with cedar shingle siding. Built early in the 20th century to house horses used in the nursery operation, it is five bays wide on the gable end and about seven bays deep. A wing extended to the left (south) until its recent removal.

3. Van Dyke/Hoffman House, 325 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 3).
Now in its fourth location, this house was constructed on the east side of U.S. 1, probably in the early 19th century. It is 2 ½ stories tall, five bays wide and two bays deep with a central entrance. Siding is clapboard and the gabled roof is slate. To the rear of the house are a two-story gabled workshop, constructed in the 1960s to replace an earlier structure that burned, and a garage. Both were until recently associated with the Mathias Van Dyke House (#4).

The Van Dyke/Hoffman House was first moved to the west side of U.S. 1 circa 1929, then to a site on Mapleton Road approximately opposite its present location in 1980. It was moved for the third time in the late 1980s.

4. Matthias Van Dyke House, 323 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 4).
Built in 1756, the house is constructed of fieldstone laid in coursed ashlar. The main block is four bays wide, two bays deep and two and a half stories tall. To the left (south) of the main block is a two-bay kitchen wing, built early in the 20th century to replace the original kitchen. The gable ends are stuccoed. Windows are primarily 9/1, and a classically-detailed gabled entry portico shelters the main entrance in the second bay from the left

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(south). A rear garage at basement level, with a patio on its flat roof, was added by Rolf W. Bauhan in 1963 following a fire.

The Van Dyke house with its 85 acres was one of the first four farms purchased by William Flemer, Sr. when establishing the nursery. Matthias Van Dyke built the house in 1756 on 200 acres he would later inherit from his father. It housed several British officers before the Battle of Princeton in January of 1777.

5. Ziegerhofer House and barn, 252 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 5).

Used as employee housing by Princeton Nurseries, this building consists of a small two-story, five-bay house attached to the rear (east) of a barn. The house has wood clapboard siding and generally 6/6 windows. The barn also has a gabled roof, and the north façade has a double-leaf vehicular door. Siding is wooden shingle. A one-story former stable extends westward from the barn. The structure predates the nursery, and was historically associated with the Higgins house next door (#6). The house was rented to nursery employees.

6. Higgins House, 250 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 6).

The Higgins house is frame, five bays wide and two deep with a tall 2 ½-story gabled roof punctuated by a central cross gable with a round-headed attic window. Siding is clapboard and windows are 1/1. The central entrance is protected by a full-width one-story porch. There are two brick interior end chimneys. One of the most striking features of the house is its broad frieze at eave level, with paired brackets and cornice returns. A modern one-story garage has been added on the left (north).

The house is one of the four original farms purchased by William Flemer Sr. when establishing the nursery. Stylistically it appears to date from *circa* 1880 based on its very tall profile.

7. Shennard House, 119 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 7).

The Shennard House is composed of a three-bay wide, two bay deep, two story main block and a six-bay rear ell. The house is nearly devoid of architectural detail. Siding is now aluminum and the roof is standing seam sheet metal. The main entrance is within a one-bay, flat-roofed enclosed porch. Windows are 6/6 and 2/2.

The house was in existence and was one of the original purchases when the nursery was established.

7A. Shennard Barn. Contributing (Photo 8).

Built in two parts in the 1920s following a fire that destroyed its predecessor, the two-story, cedar shingle frame section was a haybarn. The one-story masonry stable extending to the rear (south) was also used as a carpentry shop.

8. Perez/Homan House, 1 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 9)

Although the house is older than the nursery, it was not one of the first four farms purchased when the nursery was established. It is frame, three bays wide and one bay deep with a gabled roof. There is a two-bay rear ell with a nearly flat roof. The roof is gabled and siding is wood clapboard. A one-bay open hip-roofed porch shelters the central main entrance. Windows are generally 6/6 although the central window on the second floor

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of the main façade is shuttered, apparently permanently. There is one brick chimney, centered on the roof ridge. There is a one-car garage behind the house (#8A). Based on its stylistic attributes, the house probably dates from the third quarter of the 19th century. It was rented to nursery employees.

9. Lofland House, 3 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 10).

Now a duplex residence, the Lofland house was a barn or carriage house on one of the farms purchased by the Flemers (possibly originally associated with #8). It is four bays wide, two stories tall, and is one of the few buildings on the nursery property with board and batten siding. There is a one-story shed-roof addition on the front (north) façade. There is one central brick chimney. Windows are generally 6/6. The two entrances are paired near the center of the building under an extension of the shed roof of the addition.

10. Cruz House, 5 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 11).

Architecturally unpretentious, this house is frame, two bays wide on the front gable end and four irregular bays deep. The roof is sheet metal and the siding is vinyl. Windows are generally 6/6. A one-bay shed-roof porch shelters the entry.

Although its date of construction is unknown, it was moved here by William Flemer, Jr. from one of the farms he purchased for incorporation into the nursery. The house was rented to nursery employees.

11. Pritchett House, 7 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 12).

Similar to its neighbor (#10) in massing and finish, the Pritchett House is frame, two stories tall and two bays wide. It is two bays deep plus a one-bay shed-roof rear ell. The main entry is in the front gable end, sheltered by a one-bay shed-roof porch. Windows are generally 6/6. The house appears to have been raised several feet; the foundation is cement block above stone.

Also like its neighbor, the house was moved here by William Flemer, Jr. at an unknown date during development of the nursery and rented to nursery employees. It is speculated that both may have been tenant houses on farms acquired by Flemer. Its date of construction is unknown.

12. Vik House, 8 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 13).

Until early 2007 the Vik house stood alone on Nursery property east of Greenwood Avenue and south of Ridge Road. In that year it was moved to its new location within the "Princeton Nurseries Village," a housing development comprised of seven former nursery houses (buildings #8 through 14). Similar in scale and detail to its neighbors to the south and west, the Vik house is a two and a half story frame house with its entry in the gable end. It is three bays wide on the first floor and two on the second, and four bays deep (with attached shed-roof rear ell). The entrance is within a full-width hip-roofed porch. Siding is vinyl and windows are generally 1/1. The history of how and when the house came to be located on Greenwood Avenue is unknown, but it was occupied by Princeton Nurseries employees.

13. Andujar House, 10 Old Nursery Lane. Contributing (Photo 14).

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The Andujar House was originally associated with the Higgins house farther south on Mapleton Road (#6), where it was the barn or carriage house until World War I, when William Flemer, Jr. converted it into Princeton Nurseries' first office building. After construction of the present office building (#15) in the 1920s, it was converted again for use as employee housing. In 2007 it was moved from its original site behind the Higgins house to its present location in Princeton Nurseries Village. The house is frame, two stories plus attic, with a gabled roof. It is irregularly three bays wide, with the entrance in the center bay. There is a one-bay wide, two-story ell to the right (now north). Siding is wooden shiplap on the main block and clapboard on the ell. Windows are generally 6/6. The building is presumed to be generally contemporaneous with the Higgins House, i.e. late 19th century.

14. Rutherford House, 134 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photo 15).

A building at this location is identified on the 1876 Everts & Stewart map as "J. Rutherford," presumably this house. The 1850 Otley and Keily map of Middlesex County showed a store on the site.

The house was historically used as a duplex occupied by Nursery employees, divided front and rear. Of frame construction, the house is five bays wide and four bays deep with a gabled roof. The main entrance is centered in the front façade, under a gabled one-bay porch, and features sidelights and a fanlight. Windows are generally 6/6 although a tripartite window is centered in the second story of the main façade. Siding is clapboard. There is a two-story, four-bay wide shed-roof rear ell.

15. Princeton Nurseries Office/Headquarters, 145 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photos 16, 17).

Built in the 1920s after the fashion of a hunting lodge by an unknown architect, the style of the Office was radically changed by Princeton architect Rolf W. Bauhan in the 1960s to its present Colonial Revival appearance. It faces east, away from Mapleton Road, into an enclosed yard created by buildings #16-18. It is one and a half stories tall above a cobblestone foundation and consists of a main block and an ell to the right (north). The entrance is in a projecting cross gable to the east; the main doorway is in a gable entry and features an arched fanlight and paired sidelights. The slate roof is punctuated by gabled roof dormers and the walls are stuccoed (with horizontally beaded boards in the gable peaks). Windows are generally 6/6 or diamond-pane upper sash above single-light lower sash.

Bauhan changed the rooflines from the original jerkinhead (sometimes called a hipped gable or a clipped gable) to full gable on the main roof, cross gable and dormer. He also removed a *porte-cochère* on the south end and added the roof dormers. The composition of the building as a group of masses of differing heights is illustrative of Bauhan's interpretation of Colonial domestic architecture.

The interior of the building is not Colonial Revival. Its principal feature is a two story central space with half-timber walls, a balcony and cobblestone fireplace.

16. Blacksmith Shop/Safety and Education Building. Contributing (Photo 18).

Stylistic and material similarities to the Office (#15) suggest this building too was reconfigured by Rolf Bauhan, perhaps about the time its use changed. It is one and a half stories high with an offset gabled roof; the west side

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façade is taller than the east. The gabled peak is sided with wood shingles and there are there is a group of three 12-pane windows. A pedestrian door provides access from the south. Historic photos (Photos 40 and 41) show it to have had a jerkinhead roof and three windows on the east façade.

17. Large Packing Shed. Contributing (Photos 19, 20).

The western end of this building is the original packing shed, built adjacent to the tracks of the Rocky Hill Branch Railroad, probably around World War I when William Flemer, Sr. first established the nursery. In the nursery's scheme of identifying buildings it was known as Building 2. To this were added linearly along the railroad tracks additional sections known to the nursery as buildings 3,4,5,6 and 7 (all of which are part of Building #17 for the purposes of this nomination).

Building 2—the westernmost section—is a broad, 9-bay wide two-story wood frame structure with a gabled roof. There is a *porte-cochère* on the south façade sheltering a loading door with overhead crane, and there is a vehicular entrance on the west. Siding is clapboard. The interior of the original section features columns fashioned from tree trunks, supporting a two-story space. Partitions retain their original vertically beaded paneling. Windows are 6/6 (now sealed by temporary exterior plywood panels).

The next three sections were so-called common storage, neither heated nor refrigerated, in which dormant plant stock was held from about November through April. The last two sections are insulated and were refrigerated so stock could be kept dormant for about two months longer; the goal was to ship plants before they began to leaf out in the Spring. An extension of the original building, these sections are similar in height and width to the original, the principal differences being the materials used. Walls are cement block and posts and beams are steel. Since these buildings were primarily used for storage and shipping, windows would be superfluous and there are few of them. Each section contains eight bays.

18. Tree Storage Building. Contributing (Photo 21)

Similar in function to the insulated storage parts of #17 but with greater interior vertical clearance, this building was used for winter storage of harvested trees awaiting Spring shipment. Of modern building materials and lacking any style or ornament, it is a long, gable-roof building served by overhead vehicular doors on the north façade accessible to the nursery's delivery trucks or customers' trucks. The eastern end was built first, to which the western end was added. The roof of the latter is supported by steel trusses while the latter has steel columns. Walls are cement block.

Known to nursery workers as the Number 9 Building, functionally it was as much the heart of the operation as was #17 above.

19. Greenhouse Complex. Contributing (Photos 22,23).

The greenhouse complex consists of a two-story frame Propagation House oriented east-west, from which greenhouses extended to both the north and south (originally eight in each direction for a total of 16), constructed so as to share their long walls with their neighbor. Eight survive, four to the north and four to the south. Benches in the greenhouses are poured concrete.

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The Propagation House is lit on the first floor by the greenhouses and on the second by six groups of three 12-pane windows. Prominently attached to the Propagation House is a terra cotta smokestack, approximately twice as high as the building, bearing the letters "PN" in lighter-colored terra cotta. It served two coal-fired boilers, later replaced by oil burners. William Flemer, Jr. built the greenhouses in the 1920s.

20. The Cottage, 149 Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photos 24, 25).

The Cottage is a one and a half story, two-bay wide vernacular house purchased by the nursery and used as employee housing. It is frame with clapboard siding on the first floor and wood shingle in the gable peak. A full-width one-story porch shelters the entry. There are gabled wall dormers on both side facades and a projecting bay on the first floor of the right (south) elevation. Windows are generally 2/2. Based on its style the house appears to date from the 1920s.

The one-story garage (#20A), added by Rolf Bauhan before 1966, can hardly be called high-style. It is a two-car garage with a pedestrian door. The roof is gabled with cornice returns, and there are two 12-pane windows and one 6-pane window in the gable peak on each of the side façades.

#20B is non-contributing, a modern one-story cement block telephone service building.

21. Seed Department. Contributing (Photos 26, 27)

Two buildings comprise the Seed Department, reached by the former right-of-way of the Camden and Amboy Railroad. The tracks along the canal were removed *circa* 1865, but a short section between the canal and the junction of the Kingston Branch and the Rocky Hill Branch (just east of Mapleton Road) remained until the early 20th century; it is now an unpaved lane lined on both sides by towering oaks.. The site is currently occupied by Mapleton Nurseries, founded and originally operated by William Flemer, IV on leased land destined to become permanent open space.

Building #21 was the work building for the Seed Department. It is a one-story gable-roof building, one bay wide and four bays deep. Siding is wood shingle and windows are 6/6. There is a brick gable end chimney at the back (west). A shed/ell extends to the right (north) from the main block. Although it cannot be said to have architectural style, the wood shingle siding, 6/6 windows and gable roof suggest it was built during the William Flemer, Jr. era.

Building #21A dates from the 1970s. It is a gabled barn-like building sided and roofed in fiberglass panels.

22. Fenwick House, 1011 Ridge Road. Contributing (Photo 28).

Stylistically the Fenwick House appears to predate the establishment of Princeton Nurseries. It is a simple frame house, two stories tall, three bays wide and two bays deep with a gabled roof and a shed-roof rear ell. Siding is wood shingle and there are two interior end brick chimneys. Windows are generally 6/6. The house was used as employee housing by Princeton Nurseries.

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Near the house is a collapsing wooden barn (#22A).

23. I. C. Withington House, 1004 Ridge Road. Contributing (Photo 29).

Located on the north side of Ridge Road, the Withington House probably dates from *circa* 1860. It was owned by a son of Phineas Withington, one of the backers of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. In recent years it was owned by William Flemer, IV. It is frame, three bays wide and one bay deep with wood clapboard siding and a gabled roof. A central cross gable with exposed rafter tails and an unusual wooden diamond motif appears to be a later addition. There is a central brick chimney and an off-center one-story hip-roofed porch. A one-story ell extends to the rear, with another chimney at the gable end. Windows are irregularly spaced and are generally 6/6; small windows at the second floor level are four-light, fixed pane sash. The lot is bordered on the north by the former right-of-way of the Camden and Amboy Railroad. The house was recommended as individually eligible for inclusion in the Register by the 2002 survey of South Brunswick Township.

24. Joyce House, 1007 Ridge Road. Contributing (Photo 30).

Like the nearby Fenwick House which it resembles in scale and massing, this building predates the establishment of Princeton Nurseries but was later used as employee housing. It is frame, three bays wide and two bays deep with a gabled roof and a two-story gabled rear ell. A full-width one-story front porch shelters the first floor of the main elevation, which includes a one-story, three-part projecting bay. Windows are generally 1/1 or 2/2. Siding is vinyl.

25. Braddock House, 7 Railroad Avenue. Contributing (Photo 31).

The Braddock House also appears stylistically to predate Princeton Nurseries and was used as employee housing. It is a frame house, two stories tall, three bays wide and two deep with a one-story shed-roof rear ell. Siding is vinyl and windows are generally 2/2. The main entry is centered on the front (north) façade and is within a one-bay, one-story flat-roof porch with square posts.

26. Eugene Harvey House, 9 Railroad Avenue. Contributing (Photo 32).

Located at the southeast corner of Railroad Avenue and Greenwood Avenue, the Eugene Harvey house is a 2 ½-story, frame, gable-front house with vinyl siding. It is three bays wide and two bays deep, with a one-bay, two-story flat-roofed rear ell. A full-width, one-story, flat-roof porch spans the front (north) elevation. Windows are generally 2/2 although there is an unusual narrow 1/1 window above the front door. A box cornice with returns is supported by widely-spaced brackets. Stylistically the house appears to date from the last quarter of the 19th century. It was rented to nursery employees.

27. Harvey House, 6 Greenwood Avenue. Contributing (Photo 33).

Architecturally the Harvey House appears to date from the end of the 19th century due to its applied detail, but the underlying massing suggests it may be an earlier side-hall house that underwent later alteration. It is frame, 2 ½-stories tall, two bays wide and two bays deep. The roof is gabled and there is a gabled two-story rear ell. The front (east) elevation contains, besides the main entry, a one-story, three-part projecting bay window and a one-story porch that continues around the right (north) elevation. The front door has paired round-arch panels, typical of the Italianate style. Paired brackets support a boxed cornice, and the gable peaks of the right elevation of the

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main block and the rear (west) elevation of the ell contain the most elaborate scrollsawn woodwork found anywhere on the nursery property. Siding is wood clapboard. Windows are generally 2/2 although there are some 6/6s on secondary elevations.

West of the house is a small two-story barn (#27A).

Greenwood Avenue was created by Princeton Nurseries as an enclave of employee housing. At one time there were at least six more buildings on the street, one of which was a chapel. The street is accessible only from Railroad Avenue at the north end and by unpaved nursery lanes at the south. It is paved but there are no sidewalks or curbs.

28. Ten Broeck/Shope House, 983 Ridge Road. Contributing (Photo 34).

The Ten Broeck/Shope House is so called from its notation on the 1850 Otley and Keily map. On the 1876 Everts & Stewart map it is shown as "C. Sheppard." Formerly owned by Princeton Nurseries, William Flemer, Jr. sold it to a family named Shope. Architecturally it has Italianate detailing. It is frame with wood shingle siding, three bays wide and 2 ½ stories tall. The front (north) elevation is dominated by a central cross gable, in the peak of which is a characteristically Italianate paired round-arch window. A one-story hip-roof porch spans the front façade. Windows are generally 2/2.

29. Goeke House, 979 Ridge Road. Non-contributing (Photo 35).

Built in the 1960s, this is a one-story ranch house built on land which once belonged to the nurseries, but is otherwise unrelated to the nursery.

30. Mapleton Road Bridge over Heathcote Brook (Photo 36)

Known formally as Middlesex County Bridge 4-B-68, the bridge was designed by Vollmer and Associates LLP and built in 2001. It features concrete parapets with cast panels.

31. Ridge Road Bridge over Heathcote Brook (Photo 37)

Middlesex County Bridge 4-B-54, designed by Purcell Associates, Inc., was built in 1989. It has low concrete parapets topped by extruded aluminum railings. Ridge Road itself is a South Brunswick Township road although the bridge remains under County jurisdiction.

32. Mapleton Road. Contributing (Photos 38,39)

First surveyed in 1749, Mapleton Road achieved significance relative to Princeton Nurseries early in the 20th century when William Flemer, Jr. planted plane trees on both sides of it near the southern boundary of the nominated property. The entire length of Mapleton Road within the nominated area is considered contributing as the "main street" of Princeton Nurseries.

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The Princeton Nurseries Historic District, also known as Princeton Nurseries Kingston Site, is nationally significant because of its place in the history of commercial horticulture, the contributions to horticulture of the founding Flemer family (most notably William Flemer, III) and because it typifies the characteristics of an early 20th century self-contained plant nursery, thus meeting National Register Criteria A., B. and C. In the early 20th century this neighborhood of farms underwent major transformation to a new use that would persist in earnest until the 1960s. In 1913 William Flemer, Sr. began acquiring farms along Mapleton Road for what would become Princeton Nurseries. Eventually growing to encompass over 1,000 acres in three contiguous municipalities and employing more than 300 workers, Princeton Nurseries gained fame as the source of dozens of patented plants that were sold wholesale to landscapers, parks and municipalities throughout the East Coast and as far west as Chicago and Milwaukee. Nursery operations were transferred to Allentown, New Jersey beginning in 1962 and ceased entirely in Kingston in 1995. The nominated property is also associated with the Revolutionary War: British officers were garrisoned at the Matthias Van Dyke House prior to the Battle of Princeton (January 3, 1777), and in June of 1778 the American army passed along Ridge Road en route to the Battle of Monmouth. With respect to Criterion B, the nursery was the product of and is closely associated with the Flemer family, of whom it was arguably William Flemer, III who had the greatest impact on commercial horticulture. He achieved international renown through his plant introductions and led several professional nursery associations. Ultimately he patented nearly four dozen plants. His life's work was acknowledged by numerous medals and awards; among these were the Veitch Memorial Medal awarded by the Royal Horticultural Society, the Hall of Fame award from the American Association of Nurserymen, the Medal of Honor award from the Garden Club of America, the Thomas Roland and Jackson Dawson medals from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Arthur Hoyt Scott Garden Award and the Catherine H. Sweeney Award from the American Horticultural Society. As a district, Princeton Nurseries meets Criterion C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of a nearly self-contained commercial nursery, where stock was raised from seed and grafts to marketable size by a workforce that largely lived on site in company-owned housing. Surviving features illustrative of this process include the headquarters building, propagation building, two packing and shipping buildings, greenhouses, workers' houses, and of course the extensive fields reached by unpaved lanes and separated by windbreaks (often poplar trees), known locally as "windrows," planted to conserve soil moisture.

The area was settled early in the 18th century and by mid-century was home to a mill and at least one substantial stone house, the Matthias Van Dyke House, both located on Mapleton Road. The neighborhood consisted of scattered small farms when the Delaware and Raritan Canal was built through it on the right bank of the Millstone River in the early 1830s. The Camden and Amboy Railroad laid tracks through the area *circa* 1839, along the canal from Trenton and, avoiding the high ground where the village of Kingston is located, turned northeast to Major Road (near Deans Pond) from where it followed the route now used by the Northeast Rail Corridor to New Brunswick..

Taken together, the surviving buildings and patterns of land use form a rural historic landscape, defined as "...a geographical area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features" (U. S. Department of the Interior

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1999). The landscape - a considerable portion of which has been preserved either by ordinance or preservation covenant - bears the signs of four generations of commercial horticulture (all in the Flemer family), principally in the survival of the buildings associated with the nursery operations, all built by and for the nursery. Shaping of the landscape is also evidenced by the relocation of various buildings, primarily small houses that the company rented to nursery employees, and the survival of demarcated fields in which the nursery stock was raised.

Although the nominated property is much reduced in acreage from the extent of Princeton Nurseries at the peak of its production here, the district nonetheless encompasses the heart of the operation, including all of its major buildings and the fields that surrounded them.

The period of significance begins in 1913, the year in which land acquisition and modification began, and extends until 1962, when nursery operations were moved to Allentown, New Jersey. The district can be seen as nationally significant for its role in shaping landscapes far beyond central New Jersey: Princeton Nurseries was ideally (and purposely) positioned geographically to participate in the large-scale planting of street trees that occurred in the United States after World War I and the suburbanization following World War II. Stock introduced by Princeton Nurseries was used throughout the eastern United States and was used to landscape the suburbs that thrived in (and to a large extent shaped) the post-World War II period. Among the best-known of Princeton Nurseries' introductions is the disease-resistant Princeton Elm (*Ulmus americana* 'Princeton'), specimens of which line Washington Road in nearby West Windsor Township, Mercer County, forming the Washington Road Elm Allée (listed in the National Register on January 14, 1999).

Commercial Horticulture in America

Commercial horticulture in the United States can be traced to the efforts of avocational Colonial botanists, working principally in the New England and Mid-Atlantic colonies. Besides the well-known botanical interests of Thomas Jefferson,¹ these included Philadelphia's John Bartram and his son William. However, the raising of plant stock for sale was not the primary focus of these pioneering plantsmen. That honor is usually accorded to William Prince, founder of the first American nursery in Flushing, New York (now part of the borough of Queens) in 1737.

American nurserymen at first concentrated on fruit trees. In a circular Prince published in 1771 he advertised for sale 33 types of plums, two dozen varieties of apples, 42 pears and a dozen types of nectarines. Three years later Prince's son William offered for sale magnolias, catalpas, almonds, gooseberries, strawberries, grapevines, mulberries and filberts. In 1789 the nursery was visited by President George Washington. Two years later Thomas Jefferson paid a visit and placed an order for sugar maples, cranberries, six "sumachs" and 12 pears. William Prince Jr., the third generation, established a second nursery nearby, later combined with the first. The Prince nursery remained in the family for four generations and was in business until after the Civil War (Anon. 2004, DeWan 2007).

¹ Jefferson began his nursery at Monticello in 1778. Eventually he grew over 170 varieties of fruits (The Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2007).

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Less is known about the horticultural activities of two Middlesex County families that also apparently had botanical leanings. Colonel John Wetherill assembled a plantation of 1,700 acres in what is now South Brunswick Township in the mid-18th century, and his brother George owned a similar-sized tract nearby. In 1754 Thomas Wetherill, possibly a nephew or cousin of Col. John Wetherill, asked in a letter to his neighbor Thomas Lawrence of Longbridge Farm if he would send "...a few scions of your best & largest pairs..." Both men clearly were cultivating pear orchards and Wetherill apparently was planning to graft Lawrence's scions. John Wetherill was selling stock in quantity in 1763 when he filled an order from Thomas Barton of Perth Amboy for 400 apple trees, 100 of which were grafted (Hunter Research 2003).

While the Princes were joined and followed by other nurseries on Long Island, one of the earliest in New England was founded by John Kenrick in Newton, Massachusetts. In 1790 he planted two acres of peaches, and in 1794 began advertising trees for sale. Ornamental trees were added in 1797, including Lombardy poplars, among the first available in America. In the 1830s Kenrick's son William continued and expanded the business; in 1838 he offered (among other items) 228 varieties of apples and 317 types of pears (Marchione 1998).

At about this time horticulture was intersecting with landscape design and architecture, perhaps most notably in the person of Alexander Jackson Downing. Born in Newburgh, New York on the Hudson River in 1815, Downing was the son of a nurseryman who, with his brother, operated the nursery they inherited from their father. In addition to his well-known career in architecture, Downing was also an eminent horticulturist and pomologist; his 1845 book *The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America* was the standard work on the topic for half a century (Howett 1989).

The lands that would become Princeton Nurseries were mapped as early as 1745, when the Dalley map depicted a short stretch of "Mapletown Road" extending south from Kingston (Figure 1). Mapletown took its name from Benjamin Maple whose extensive landholdings were south of Kingston and east of the Millstone River; the name would persist at least to the middle of the 19th century. The Dalley map also indicates "Thos. Leonards Mills" where Mapletown Road crossed Heathcote Brook, within the nominated area. This mill had been established by 1717 but ceased operations about 1760.²

The full length of Mapletown Road was surveyed in 1773, and by 1840 the basic infrastructure of the nursery's neighborhood was in place (Figure 2). Four isolated farmsteads stood on Mapletown Road between Ridge Road and the southern limit of the nominated property. The four are labeled on a map made in 1850 (Figure 3): H. Van Dyke, W. Van Dyke, J. Van Duyn and J. B. Story; the general vicinity is labeled "Mapletown." There was a depot where the Camden and Amboy Railroad tracks crossed Mapletown Road and a store on the opposite side of the road. The Canal had been completed, including a basin just south of Kingston.

² No systematic archaeological attempts have been made to locate the remains of Leonards Mills, and no surface remains are evident.

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The landscape changed little in the succeeding quarter century (Figure 4). Van Dykes were still numerous, but the J.B. Story house was now labeled A.S. Meyrick. The railroad tracks along the canal were gone, having been removed *circa* 1865 after the line was realigned, following the straighter route of today's Northeast Rail Corridor, from Trenton to Major Road (in South Brunswick) was completed in 1864. The east-west remnant of the railroad remained east of the canal as the Kingston Branch; in 1866, it was realigned from New Road to extend southeast to join the main line at Monmouth Junction (rather than Major Road.) Later, just east of Mapleton Road a line was extended northwest to Kingston Basin and thence, along the canal, by the Rocky Hill Railroad and Transportation Company, to Rocky Hill; at one time the Rocky Hill Branch extended to the Terra Cotta Plant (0.6 mi. north of the Rocky Hill Station.) After 1928, the northern segment was abandoned, but into the 1970s the track existed as far as the quarry (0.6 mi. south of the former Rocky Hill Station.) In the mid 1970s the remaining tracks of both the Kingston and Rocky Hill Branches were removed..

Princeton Nurseries

Against this historical backdrop of multi-generational tree and plant nurseries in the Northeast, William Flemer Sr. founded F&F Nurseries in 1868 on a farm in Roselle, New Jersey that his father had taken in payment for a debt. Soon outgrowing the Roselle site, he moved the operation to Springfield, New Jersey, but continuing development and relatively poor soil in Springfield sent him and his son William Flemer, Jr. searching for new lands. William Flemer Jr. later recalled that the search extended from Long Island to the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

The canvas of family farms and transportation facilities near "Mapletown" was among the places visited by William Flemer, Sr. and his son William Jr. starting about 1910. In 1913, having settled on Kingston, William Flemer, Sr. purchased the 65-acre Myrick farm for \$9,000. The following year he purchased the adjacent 65-acre Higgins farm for \$14,000, then the next adjacent farm, the 85-acre Matthias Van Dyke farm, for \$12,000. The last of the initial purchases was the Archibald Gulick farm, 70 acres for \$11,500. Thus, by 1915 William Flemer, Sr. owned 285 contiguous acres of fertile farmland, and four farmhouses with outbuildings, for a total investment of \$46,500. His son recalled that the location had been chosen because it was midway between Philadelphia and New York, and Boston and Washington, for the transportation opportunities afforded by its proximity to the railroad and the canal, and for its "...very fine Sassafras loam" soil (Flemer 1978).

William Flemer, Jr., at 18, was sent to Kingston by his father in 1914 to live on and manage what was then still part of F&F Nurseries. In 1917, after the United States entered World War I, he enlisted in the Army as an ambulance driver, an event that would eventually influence the landscape of central New Jersey. Flemer was in France from the fall of 1917 until early 1919, and it was here that he encountered tree-lined rural roads. He also saw French fields separated by windbreaks of tall poplars, and he would plant both upon his return to Kingston. He also recalled spending his free time in Europe planning other improvements to the nursery.

During his son's absence, Flemer Sr. had the original office (#15) and packing house (now the western end of #17) built. Prior to this event the office had been housed in the Andujar House (#13), which at the time was the carriage house of (and stood behind) the Higgins House (#6). The architect of the new office is unknown, but its design was reminiscent of a Bavarian hunting lodge (see historic photos), with a jerkinhead roof and dormers

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and, on the interior, a two-story half-timbered space with a balcony and a cobblestone fireplace. It also had a *porte-cochère*. Its exterior was remodeled in the 1960s to its present Colonial Revival appearance by Princeton architect (and Flemer family friend) Rolf W. Bauhan. The Andujar House was moved to its present location in 2007.

Also while the younger Flemer was abroad, his father removed the one-story kitchen wing of the Matthias Van Dyke house (#4), believed to have been the earliest section, and an outbuilding. The kitchen wing had been damaged by water entering the stonework.

Flemer returned from Europe in 1919, just before a decade that would see a great surge in demand for nursery stock, particularly shade trees. Two related forces contributed to this trend. One was the post-war construction boom of the 1920s, in which cities began aggressively spreading outward, fueled in part by widespread automobile ownership. The new houses that sprang up would all need a variety of trees and shrubs to landscape their lots, and the growing towns would need shade trees for their new streets and landscaping for their parks. Second, the 1920s would witness an explosion of highway construction, quickly followed by cries for roadside beautification. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the concept of planting trees along streets was not new, but in the 1920s "...the road beautification movement took a popular and well-established design idea...from the city and suburban street and moved it to the open road" (Hand 1998). A few local examples will illustrate: in 1924 the New Jersey legislature authorized the creation of county Shade Tree Commissions; in 1926 Mercer County's Commission asked the County Freeholders to plant trees along new roadways and the Freeholders budgeted \$8,500 for this purpose. The Washington Road elms were planted about 1926. In 1930, Brunswick Pike (U.S. Route 1) from Trenton to New Brunswick was to be planted with more than 4,500 trees, and these trees were in fact supplied by Princeton Nurseries (Hand 1998).

William Flemer was not the only young American soldier who had noticed the French habit of closely-spaced roadside tree planting, and tree-lined roadways were sometimes created as living war memorials. Mercer County accomplished this in 1920, planting 180 trees on Nottingham Way between Hamilton Square and Robbinsville as a memorial to the County's men who had died in the war (Hand 1998).

As a result, the 1920s were good to the Flemers. William Jr. continued buying nearby properties, with houses when possible, until the operation exceeded 1,000 acres. F&F Nurseries maintained two locations, with production in Kingston under William Jr.'s direction and sales from Springfield handled by his brother Carl. In 1931 the firm divided into separate entities with each brother continuing to operate his respective nursery.

It was during this period that the greatest strides were made in transforming the disparate collection of farms outside Kingston into a single nursery, with results still visible today. William Flemer, Jr. built the first greenhouses and installed a water system for irrigation (that also provided domestic water service to residents of Kingston). Perhaps drawing on his military experience, he organized the nursery operations into separate departments. He began relocating the smaller houses and other outbuildings he had acquired with the farms he purchased, and began renting the houses to his employees. He created the precursor of the streetscape west of Mapleton Road (today known as Princeton Nurseries Village) by moving buildings #9, #10 and possibly #11

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behind #8 and adjacent to the Rutherford House (#14). The Railroad Avenue/Greenwood Avenue neighborhood was created. Finally, in a single stroke he visually unified almost all of the nursery buildings—residential and operational alike—by painting them a pale Colonial Revival yellow with white trim and black shutters, a color scheme that has largely been maintained. The nursery became the second largest account at the local paint store in Princeton, after Princeton University (Flemer 2007).

It was also during the 1920s that William Flemer, Jr. developed the Princeton Elm (*Ulmus americana* 'Princeton'), a variety of American Elm that would prove resistant to Dutch Elm disease when that disease arrived with a vengeance in the 1930s. The disease was already ravaging elms in Europe, a fact of which Flemer was undoubtedly aware, and he apparently anticipated its eventual arrival in the United States. It is this tree that lines both sides of Washington Road in West Windsor Township, creating an arched living entranceway to Princeton from the east. Other rows of Princeton Elms survive in Plainsboro Township, Middlesex County on Plainsboro Road near U.S. 1.³

Demand for nursery stock declined sharply during the Depression and through World War II. Princeton Nurseries weathered this period by raising vegetables.

William Flemer III entered the business in 1945 upon his return from wartime service. With degrees in botany from Yale, he was the grower while his brother John was the firm's business administrator. The suburban construction boom of the 1950s once again fueled demand for nursery stock, virtually repeating the 1920s, but William Flemer III's propagation expertise brought national and international acclaim. While his father had introduced the 'Euclid' Linden (*Tilia cordata* 'Euclid') and the 'Sinclair' Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba* 'Sinclair') in addition to the Princeton Elm), William Flemer III introduced the 'Shademaster' Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Shademaster'), 'October Glory' Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* 'October Glory'), 'Greenspire' Linden (*Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire'), 'Green Vase' Zelkova (*Zelkova serrata* 'Green Vase') and 'Green Mountain' Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum* 'Green Mountain'). Ultimately he patented at least 47 trees, shrubs and vines (Princeton Nurseries 2007). William Flemer III also patented a "Plant Digging Machine" in 1958, "... a machine for removing trees etc. from the earth with the roots thereof substantially dirt-free so as to facilitate handling and minimizing transportation costs in the transplanting of such plants." The machine was a digging fork on the end of a hydraulic arm, all mounted on a tractor. The digging fork would be extended into the ground beneath a tree which was then lifted; a work crew would then remove the tree to a truck. Flemer claimed in his patent application that four men and a digging machine could remove 1200 trees per day, compared to 500 trees per day by a crew of ten men without the machine (United State Patent Office 1958). In the course of his career he also received numerous professional awards and medals, listed earlier.

The nursery operation grew to the point where it resembled a small company town (Photograph 42). Besides the houses, barns, packing sheds and office there were at various times a dormitory, water tower, woodshop, swimming pool, truck shop and blacksmith shop. There was also a chapel on Greenwood Avenue among the

³ Hand 1998 contains an excellent discussion of the history of the Washington Road *allée* and its context in the roadside beautification movement.

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houses. Of these, only the blacksmith shop survives (#16). Horses were employed in the nursery until the late 1950s, after which the blacksmith shop became the Safety and Education Building.

Sales of the nursery land began in 1962, the year William Flemer Jr. retired, starting with parcels east of U.S. 1. More land was sold in 1990, and in 1995 all nursery operations were transferred to Allentown, New Jersey.

At least three of the district's buildings were designed or remodeled by Princeton architect Rolf Bauhan (1892-1966). Born in New York City, he graduated from Princeton University in 1914. After an interlude of six years that included a tour of Europe, he enrolled in Princeton University's new School of Architecture in 1920. In 1921 he earned the first Master of Fine Arts degree awarded by the school. Bauhan did not stray far from his alma mater. In 1924 he opened an architectural office in Princeton, and over the course of his career his work was centered on the town and its immediate vicinity. The majority of his output in the four decades that followed was residential; ultimately he designed over 70 new houses locally and worked on another 150. He favored the Colonial Revival style, although he was fluent in other revival styles such as Tudor and Dutch Colonial.

Bauhan and William Flemer Jr. were friends, and the architect did "extensive restoration work at Princeton Nurseries" (Croll 1997: 30). This work is known to have included alterations and additions to Flemer's residence, the Matthias Van Dyke house, where he added the front portico and rear garage and probably the two-story wing to the south (where the original kitchen wing had stood) in 1963; conversion of the nursery office from a Bavarian hunting lodge to a Colonial Revival office building and similar renovations to the blacksmith shop, both *circa* 1960; and design of a new garage behind 149 Mapleton Road (#20A). Bauhan died in 1966 at the age of 74.

Although its acreage today has been diminished by land sales, and a number of buildings are no longer present, the nominated property and its buildings are protected by a web of public ownership, municipal preservation ordinances and preservation covenants. Bauhan's Colonial Revival office (#15), its hunting lodge interior largely intact, today is the headquarters of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, and the former blacksmith shop/safety and education building next door (#16) is used by the park for natural and historic programs. The spatial organization of the property is intact; the nursery's major operation buildings are intact and in their original locations (although some greenhouses are gone), and surviving houses are clustered into small neighborhoods on Mapleton Road and Greenwood Avenue. Almost all the houses in the district that are in private ownership have preservation covenants and are in a South Brunswick Township historic preservation district protected by municipal ordinance. The nominated property is largely within a designated HCS/ CES (Historic and Cultural Site/Critical Environmental Site) area in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Perhaps most significantly, the surviving open space, still divided into fields by berms, lanes and hedgerows, unmistakably conveys the nursery's presence in the landscape, enhanced by the nearby canal and William Flemer Jr.'s *allées* of plane and oak.

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Patents issued to William Flemer, III
(Sorted by date issued)

<i>Patent no.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Issued</i>
2835992	Plant Digging Machine	5/27/1958
PP1752	Honey Locust Tree	9/16/1958
PP2038	Thornless Honey Locust Tree	3/21/1961
PP2086	Linden Tree	9/5/1961
PP2087	Linden Tree	9/5/1961
PP2116	Maple Tree	12/26/1961
PP2338	Pagoda Tree	1/1/1964
PP2339	Maple Tree	1/1/1964
PP2675	Ginkgo Tree	10/1/1966
PP2679	Hawthorn Tree	10/11/1966
PP2795	Hackberry Tree	2/6/1968
PP2801	Crab Apple Tree	3/12/1968
PP2821	Crab Apple Tree	7/23/1968
PP2912	Crab Apple Tree	7/29/1969
PP2935	Yellow-Wood Tree	10/28/1969
PP2936	Oak Tree	10/28/1969
PP3092	Shadblow Tree	4/1/1972
PP3108	Elm Tree (With William J. Flemer)	4/1/1972
PP3400	Korean Mountain Ash Tree	9/18/1973
PP3817	Maple Tree	12/1/1975
PP4119	Vine -- <i>Campsis Radicans</i>	10/4/1977
PP4458	<i>Hydrangea Quercifolia</i>	9/4/1979
PP4540	<i>Prunus Subhirtella</i>	5/27/1980
PP4632	Flowering Crab Apple Tree	1/27/1981
PP5080	Zelkova Serrata Tree	8/2/1983
PP5524	<i>Sophora Japonica</i> Princeton Upright	7/30/1985
PP5730	Flowering Cherry Tree	4/29/1986
PP5800	Flowering Crab Apple Tree	11/18/1986
PP6727	Princeton Gold	4/11/1989
PP7072	<i>Amelanchier Candensis</i> "White Pillar"	12/12/1989
PP7147	<i>Malus Hupehensis</i> Named "Cardinal"	2/13/1990
PP7203	<i>Amelanchier Laevis</i> "Majestic"	3/27/1990

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PP7217	<i>Acer Palmatum</i> "Crimson Prince"	4/10/1990
PP7731	<i>Robinia</i> `Purple Crown`	12/3/1991
PP9093	<i>Quercus Palustris</i> `Pringreen`	3/28/1995
PP10481	<i>Clethra Alnifolia</i> Plant Named `September Beauty`	7/7/1998
PP10557	<i>Maackia Amurensis</i> Plant Named `Starburst`	8/18/1998
	<i>Prunus Sargentii</i> Plant Named `Princeton	
PP10989	Snowcloud`	6/29/1999
PP11055	Forsythia Hybrid Plant Named `Princeton Gold`	9/7/1999
PP12079	<i>Viburnum Dentatum</i> Plant Named `October Glory`	9/4/2001
	<i>Hamamelis Virginiana</i> Plant Named `November	
PP12100	Glow`	9/18/2001
PP12549	<i>Hamamelis Mollis</i> Plant Named "5473"	4/16/2002

Source: U.S. Patent Office

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Middlesex County, NJ

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Princeton Nurseries Historic District
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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Princeton Nurseries Historic District is shown on the enclosed map entitled “Princeton Nurseries Historic District, Plainsboro and South Brunswick Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey.” The map is a compilation of current tax maps, originally drawn at 1” = 100’ and 1” = 200’.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Princeton Nurseries Historic District was drawn so as to include the historic core of the nursery operation, including the four farms that formed the original core of the nursery, the headquarters building, packing and shipping facilities, and plant propagation buildings (seed buildings and greenhouses). Equally important to the district’s identity is the housing stock, both the workers’ and the owners’ houses are within the nominated district. A representative area of open fields, in which the nursery stock was raised to marketable size, is included, although the surviving lands are reduced from the area operated by the nursery at its peak and some former nursery land adjacent to the district has been developed. Accordingly, while much of the eastern boundary is a line of convenience, modern housing east of Mapleton Road and north of Seminary Road in Plainsboro Township dictated the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the district. As a whole, these resources—the administrative buildings, the housing and the fields—are sufficient to convey the significance of the nursery.

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Middlesex County, NJ

Owners:

Bldg. No.	Name	Street Address	B/L	Munic.	Owner
1	Modern house	80 Mapleton Rd.	101/6	Plainsboro	DuFour, Joseph 80 Mapleton Road Princeton, NJ 08540
2	Barn	80 Mapleton Road	101/6	Plainsboro	DuFour, Joseph 80 Mapleton Road Princeton, NJ 08540
3	Hoffman House	325 Mapleton Road	101/5	Plainsboro	Haeuber, Douglas & Devora 325 Mapleton Road Princeton, NJ 08540
4	Matthias Van Dyke House	323 Mapleton Road	101/4	Plainsboro	Wm. Flemer's Sons, Inc. P. O. Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
	(vacant land)	Mapleton	101/3.01	Plainsboro	State of NJ Green Acres Program 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
	(vacant land)	Mapleton	101/3.02	Plainsboro	Trustees of Princeton University/Real Estate 22 Chambers St. Suite 200A Princeton, NJ 08540
	(vacant land)	982-1002 Ridge Road	98/10.02	S. Brunswick	Township of South Brunswick PO Box 190, 540 Ridge Road Monmouth Jct., NJ 08540 [sic]
5	Ziegerhofer house and barn	252 Mapleton Rd.	99/3.211	S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540
6	Higgins (Crane/Lowe) house	250 Mapleton Rd.	99/3.211	S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540
7	Shennard House	119-121 Mapleton Rd.	99/3.112	S. Brunswick	Flemers, Wm. & Sons Inc. P. O. Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
	(vacant land)	113-115 Mapleton Rd.	99/3.212	S. Brunswick	Township of South Brunswick PO Box 190, 540 Ridge Road

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		(vacant land)	119 Mapleton Rd.	99/3.213	S. Brunswick	Monmouth Jct., NJ 08852. Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540
8	Perez/Homan house	1 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.01	S. Brunswick		Princeton Nurseries Village, LLC PO Box 7787 Princeton, NJ 08543
9	Lofland house	3 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.02	S. Brunswick		Princeton Nurseries Village, LLC PO Box 7787 Princeton, NJ 08543
10	Cruz house	5 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.03	S. Brunswick		Princeton Nurseries Village, LLC PO Box 7787 Princeton, NJ 08543
11	Pritchett house	7 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.04	S. Brunswick		Princeton Nurseries Village, LLC PO Box 7787 Princeton, NJ 08543
12	Vik House	8 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.07	S. Brunswick		Daniella & Brian Sassman 185 Red Cedar Road Levittown, PA 19055
13	Andujar house	10 Old Nursery Lane	100/3.06	S. Brunswick		Princeton Nurseries Village, LLC PO Box 7787 Princeton, NJ 08543
14	J. Rutherford House	134 Mapleton Rd.	100/3.05	S. Brunswick		Nardi, Alfred J Julianne 134 Mapleton Rd. Princeton, NJ 08543
15	Headquarters Building	123-145 Mapleton Road	99/3.111	S. Brunswick		NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
16	Blacksmith Shop	123-145 Mapleton Road	99/3.111	S. Brunswick		NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
17	Large Packing Building		99/3.113	S. Brunswick		NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection

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					401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
18	Small Packing Building/ Tree Storage Building		99/3.113	S. Brunswick	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
19	Propagation House		99/3.113	S. Brunswick	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
	(vacant land)	1019-1035 Ridge Road	102/1.011	S. Brunswick	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
20	The Cottage	149 Mapleton Ave.	102/2.04	S. Brunswick	Mazzucato, Jacopo 149 Mapleton Rd. Princeton, NJ 08540
20B	AT&T utility shed	153 Mapleton Ave.	102/2.021	S. Brunswick	Amer Telephone & Telegraph Co. PO Box 7207 Bedminster, NJ 07921-7207
	(vacant land)	147 Mapleton Ave.	102/2.05	S. Brunswick	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
	(vacant land)	100-22, 140-60 Mapleton Rd.	100/3.08	S. Brunswick	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection 401 E. State Street Trenton, NJ 08625
21	Mapleton Nurseries house	138 Mapleton Rd.	100/3.09	S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540
21A	Sand Building	138 Mapleton Rd.	100/3.09	S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540
22	Fenwick House/Wesley Harvey house	1011 Ridge Road, SB	99/3.114	S. Brunswick	Flemers, Wm. & Sons Inc. P. O. Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
23	I.C. Withington House	1004 Ridge Road	98/10.031	S. Brunswick	Listig, Jonathan 1004 Ridge Road Monmouth Jct., NJ 08852
24	Joyce/Boring House	1007 Ridge Rd.	99/7.011	S. Brunswick	Flemers, Wm. & Sons Inc. P. O. Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501

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25	Braddock house	7 Railroad Ave.	109/1.01	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
26	Eugene Harvey House	9 Railroad Ave. Ave.	109/2.01	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/4.01	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/6	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/7	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/8	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/9	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries	
	(vacant land)		109/10	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/11	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		109/12	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
27	Harvey House	6 Greenwood Ave.	108/1	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	
	(vacant land)		108/2	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501	

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		(vacant land)	108/3	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/4	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/5	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/6	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/7	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/8	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/9	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/10	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
		(vacant land)	108/11	S. Brunswick	Wm. Flemer's Sons/Princeton Nurseries PO Box 185 Allentown, NJ 08501
28	Ten Broeck House	983 Ridge Rd.	99/8.02	S. Brunswick	Woodworth, Samuel T. & Johanna W. PO Box 567/983 Ridge Rd Kingston, NJ 08528
29	Goeke house	979 Ridge Rd.	99/8.031	S. Brunswick	Smith, Mark G.R. & Katharine C.N. PO Box 343 Kingston, NJ 08528
		(vacant land)	987-1001 Ridge Rd.	99/8.041 S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University

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(vacant land)	969-977 Ridge Rd.	99/10.12	S. Brunswick	105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540 Township of South Brunswick PO Box 190, 540 Ridge Road Monmouth Jct., NJ 08852.
(vacant land)	957 Ridge Rd.	99/10.13	S. Brunswick	Township of South Brunswick PO Box 190, 540 Ridge Road Monmouth Jct., NJ 08852.
(vacant land)	4405 U.S. Route 1	99/14	S. Brunswick	Trustees of Princeton University 105 College Road East Princeton, NJ 08540

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Photographs:

1. Building 1. Modern house, 80 Mapleton Road.
2. Building 2. Barn, 80 Mapleton Road.
3. Building 3. Van Dyke/Hoffman House, 325 Mapleton Road.
4. Building 4. Matthias Van Dyke House, 323 Mapleton Road.
5. Building 5. Ziegerhofer House and barn, 252 Mapleton Road.
6. Building 6. Higgins House, 250 Mapleton Road.
7. Building 7. Shennard House, 119 Mapleton Road.
8. Building 7A. Shennard Barn.
9. Building 8. Perez/Homan House, 1 Old Nursery Lane.
10. Building 9. Lofland House, 3 Old Nursery Lane.
11. Building 10. Cruz House, 5 Old Nursery Lane.
12. Building 11. Pritchett House, 7 Old Nursery Lane.
13. Building 12. Vik House, 8 Old Nursery Lane.
14. Building 13. Andujar House, 10 Old Nursery Lane.
15. Building 14. Rutherford House, 134 Mapleton Road.
16. Building 15. Princeton Nurseries Office, 145 Mapleton Road.
17. Interior of Building 15.
18. Building 16. Blacksmith Shop/Safety and Education Building.

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19. Building 17. Large Packing Shed.
20. Building 17 interior, in the original western section.
21. Building 18. Tree Storage Building.
22. Building 19. Greenhouse Complex.
23. View inside Building 19; gable ends of greenhouses are visible.
24. Building 20. The Cottage, 149 Mapleton Road.
25. Building 20B. Telephone utility building (intrusion).
26. Building 21. Seed Department.
27. Building 21A. Sand building.
28. Building 22. Fenwick House, 1011 Ridge Road.
29. Building 23. I. C. Withington House, 1004 Ridge Road.
30. Building 24. Joyce House, 1007 Ridge Road.
31. Building 25. Braddock House, 7 Railroad Avenue.
32. Building 26. Eugene Harvey House, 9 Railroad Avenue.
33. Building 27. Harvey House, 6 Greenwood Avenue.
34. Building 28. Ten Broeck/Shope House, 983 Ridge Road.
35. Building 29. Goeke House, 979 Ridge Road. Intrusion.
36. Mapleton Road Bridge over Heathcote Brook.

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37. Ridge Road Bridge over Heathcote Brook.
38. Allée on Mapleton Road near the Mathias Van Dyke House. Structures visible at right are outside the district.
39. View south on Mapleton Road.
40. 1920s photo showing the headquarters building (#15) in its original configuration.
41. 1920s photo of Princeton Nurseries. The headquarters building (#15) is at left, the packing shed (#17) is at right.
42. Undated aerial photograph of Princeton Nurseries, looking east. Ridge Road is visible at upper left, Mapleton Road is parallel to and near the bottom of the picture. The greenhouses and packing building are visible at left center.
43. View of the former Camden and Amboy Railroad roadbed west of Mapleton Road.
44. General view of nursery houses on Mapleton Road; left to right, buildings 14, 13, 9 and 10.
45. Overview at Railroad Avenue and Greenwood Avenue. Building 26 at left, 27 at right.
46. Rows of nursery stock, north side of Ridge Road.
47. Rows of nursery stock, west side of Mapleton Road.
48. Typical windrow, east of Mapleton Road near headquarters complex.
49. Typical windrow, east of Mapleton Road and south of headquarters complex.
50. View west showing ginkgos lining field road; headquarters complex (l-r buildings 18 and 19) visible at rear.
51. View north of headquarters complex from field. Buildings 19, 18 and 17 visible.
52. View north across nursery fields south of headquarters complex.
53. View north showing rows of nursery stock west of Mapleton Road with building 9 visible at rear.
54. View west in seedling field west of Mapleton Road; trees at rear indicate Delaware and Raritan Canal.

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55. View from seedling field east toward Mapleton Road. Building 7 is visible.

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Princeton Nurseries
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Figure 1. A portion of Dalley's *Map of the Road from Trenton to Amboy*, 1745

Figure 2. A portion of *Princeton and Vicinity*, Sheet 127, United States Coast Survey, 1840.

Figure 3. A portion of Otley and Keily's *Map of Middlesex County*, 1850.

Figure 4. A portion of Everts & Stewart's *Combination Atlas Map of Middlesex County, New Jersey*, 1876.

Figure 5. Princeton Nurseries in 1972, near its peak. Historic district boundary shown in red. U.S. Route 1 is at the top of the map. The lower right part of the map, below the line marked "Pennsylvania Railroad," is discontinuous and is located near Monmouth Junction, New Jersey, between two and three miles east of the core of the nursery (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Lands in production by Princeton Nurseries were not confined to the Kingston site nor was all the land owned by Princeton Nurseries. This map shows the location of the three components of Figure 5 (with the district boundary) and a portion of a map from Breese, *Princeton University Land* (labeled 7, 8, 11 and 12), also cultivated by the nursery, all superimposed on parts of the Princeton, Hightstown and Monmouth Junction USGS quadrangles.